



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's **ENERGY STAR® Program** promotes the use of high-efficiency technologies and equipment. ENERGY STAR labeled homes use at least 30% less energy than homes built to meet the national Model Energy Code while maintaining or improving indoor air quality. These fact sheets are designed to help consumers learn more about the energy-efficient improvements to their ENERGY STAR labeled homes.

# APPRECIATING THE DIFFERENCES OF ENERGY STAR® LABELED HOMES

## ENERGY STAR LABELED HOME "BRAND NAME" VALUE

Many of a home's ENERGY STAR features are not obvious. This fact sheet will assist you in evaluating these features in homes you consider purchasing. Looking closely at an ENERGY STAR labeled home reveals important benefits that will improve your ultimate comfort and satisfaction.

### FEEL THE DIFFERENCE

By tuning your sense of "feel," you can predict a home's ability to maintain year-round comfort. The more harsh the weather, the more you will be able to "feel the difference".

**Feel the walls.** More and improved insulation in a home's floors, walls, and attic ensures that the wall and ceiling surfaces of your home will more closely match room temperatures. Since it is difficult to maintain a constant room temperature when the surfaces surrounding us vary significantly from desired room temperatures, effective insulation adds to a home's overall comfort.

**Feel the windows.** Advanced technology windows result in inside surface temperatures 12° F (or more) warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than inefficient windows. This enables you to position furniture next to your windows to enjoy the view without giving up the comfort. You won't have to worry about condensation on windows or moisture problems in cold weather. You won't have to worry about moisture problems, such as condensation on windows, in cold weather.

**Feel the tight construction.** Place your hand next to the edges of doors and windows, electric outlets, exterior plumbing penetrations, and the wall baseboard trim along outside walls. With tight construction, you'll notice how air-tight the home is even on the windiest of days, meaning that you won't feel annoying drafts. You'll enjoy peace-of-mind knowing that your home is safe from damaging rain, moisture, dust, pests, and pollen.

**Feel the airflow to all rooms.** While the space conditioning system fan is operating (turn it on manually if not), go to all rooms and place your hands or a tissue next to the supply grills (typically on the floor at ground level rooms and ceiling in upper level rooms). If the system is working and sized properly, the same level of air should blow from all grills, even in remote rooms. Consistent airflow ensures comfort and lower utility bills.

**Feel the air temperatures in all rooms.** A well insulated and sealed home with high-performance windows provides the same air temperature in all rooms. If you notice variations in room temperatures, your house will not be comfortable and you risk costly maintenance problems.



**Money Isn't All You're Saving**

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### HEAR THE DIFFERENCE

**Listen for noise from outside.** As you walk through homes you are considering, listen for noises from outdoor activities and traffic. Notice how a tightly-sealed, well-insulated home with advanced windows, an ENERGY STAR labeled home provides a quiet atmosphere.

**Listen for noise from inside.** Make sure the space conditioning system is operating (or turn it on manually). Notice how a well-engineered system with properly-sized components is almost too quiet to hear, yet delivers impressive warmth and cooling.

### LOOK FOR THE DIFFERENCE

**Look for the ENERGY STAR labeled home label and certificate.** This label certifies that a home has undergone a third-party inspection and testing process verifying that it meets the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) ENERGY STAR labeled homes Program guidelines. The brand name assurance of the ENERGY STAR label can provide

peace-of-mind that you are making a smart purchase and that the home will be positioned for higher resale value.

**Look for the Home Energy Rating documentation.** ENERGY STAR labeled homes are typically verified to meet EPA guidelines with a third-party energy rating. This rating provides useful information about a home's performance and expected utility bills. It is also an excellent tool for increasing resale value.

**Look for longer warranties.** ENERGY STAR labeled homes are commonly equipped with high-efficiency heating, cooling, and water heating equipment with longer warranties. These equipment warranties provide assurance that your home is better protected against unexpected maintenance costs. Some builders of ENERGY STAR labeled homes also offer utility bills warranted not to exceed impressively low amounts. This warranty locks in positive cash flow where monthly energy savings exceed small additional monthly mortgage costs to pay for any extra energy features.

## HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS THAT CARRY THE ENERGY STAR LABEL, THE SYMBOL FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

